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***Assistant Majority Leader Kevin de León Urges Health Care Reform to Focus on Affordability, Access, and Cost Containment***

**SACRAMENTO**—At today's Assembly Health Committee hearing on Governor Schwarzenegger's revised health care proposal, Assistant Majority Leader Kevin de León (D-Los Angeles) questioned California Health and Human Services Secretary Kim Belshé and asked for further details on the plan's ability to ensure affordability, access, and cost containment.

"In my district, the emergency room at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center is unfortunately the primary health care provider for many of my constituents," stated Assistant Majority Leader De León. "We need to keep in mind that many working families struggle everyday to pay for their rent, utilities, and other necessities—in order for health care to be truly accessible, it must also be *affordable*."

"We also need to address the skyrocketing costs of health care services and prescription drugs. Taking advantage of purchasing pools, embracing new and emerging technology, and promoting wellness and preventive care are important cost containment components."

"We all agree that California's health care system is broken. I am hopeful that meaningful health care reform will be accomplished this year, and I strongly encourage the Governor to continue these discussions with our legislative leadership."

An overview of the Governor's revised health care proposal, entitled the "Health Care Security and Cost Reduction Act", was presented by Secretary Kim Belshé, California Health and Human Services Agency. Members of the committee also heard testimony from stakeholders in the health care community representing consumer groups, labor, employers, health care plans, physicians, public and private hospitals, and local government programs.

On September 11, 2007, the Governor called the Legislature into Special Session with the directive to enact comprehensive health care reform.

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